



DACE

DIABLO VALLEY ATARI NEWSLETTER COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

December 1987

RETURN ADDRESS

DACE
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CONCORD, CA 94519



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MEETING SCHEDULE

The next three meetings of **DACE** will be held at the **Contra Costa Water Building** located at **1331 Concord Ave.** in Concord

Thursday - Dec 3rd - 7PM
Thursday - Jan 7th - 7PM
Thursday - Feb 4th - 7PM

December Meeting Topic

Midi-Maze Tournament (bring your favorite joystick). Our biggest 8-bit and ST software raffle ever! ST and 8-bit Disk of the Month. 5 1/4" Blank disks 10 for \$3.00 w/sleeves. Computer questions answered...And MORE!!



PRESIDENTS PAGE

by
Mark Butler



Hello everyone, Happy belated Thanksgiving and the best of Pre-Christmas wishes. If you were at the last meeting you saw Hardware John's Genlock. A super piece of hardware that plugs into your Mega (regular ST's in the future hopefully) and allows you to do all sorts of things with the display. You can see regular TV out of your Atari monitor and overlay graphics on top. Look for this product to be marketed by John in the near future.

As you may know we are going to have a big blow out of a December meeting. As it stands now we will have a MIDI-MAZE tournament. This is a multi-computer game where all the computers are connected via the midi ports and each person sits at his/her computer and interacts with the other players.

The game is a pretty straightforward shoot-em-up with you down inside of a maze. So remember to bring your favorite joystick. Don't worry if you have never played it before, it has just come out so nobody else has either. We will have a challenge ladder like we did for the air hockey championships. Be prepared to join in and have fun. Remember computers aren't always serious.

Also at the meeting will be an awesome raffle. We are planning to raffle off at least \$100 worth of goodies for each system. So bring your bucks and with a little luck you can walk away with some great stuff. Remember it is all for a good cause, your raffle dollars help keep DACE rolling along. The money is used for purchasing more raffle goods, supporting the newsletter and various activities.

Speaking of dollars, you might notice one or two ads in our newsletter. I have had several people tell me one of the things they like about the DACE newsletter is that it was free of ads. I think so too but we do have to live in the real world. DACE is not poor at the moment but we are not exactly swimming in funds. When companies came to us about running ads in the newsletter we agonized over it a long time. Finally we decided that although an ad-free newsletter is nice, they are a source of funds. So we attached a fairly high price tag to DACE advertising with the dual purpose of keeping ads to a minimum and generating revenues.

Actually I think most people are so inundated

with advertisements all day long every day that you get kind of immune to them. I know that I can skim an ad in about 1 second to see if it interests me and ignore the rest. While the DACE newsletter will never be bristling with ads (like some we know) we will be running a couple from time to time. If you really don't like this then speak up at a meeting. Remember this is your club.

Things continue to look up for both Atari computers. Some newthings to place on your Christmas wish list might be:

Cycleknight (8-bit \$19.95) ride your motorcycle into battle in a medieval castle against the black knight. **Time Bomb** (8-bit \$9.95) get to the top of a building in time to stop a bomb from going off. **Classy Chassy** (8-bit \$9.95) pinball game with "english". **Elite Personal Accountant** (8-bit \$39.95) complete home accounting. **Lightspeed C** (8-bit \$39.95) new full C implementation compiler. **Shiloh** (8-bit \$49.95) Civil war game. **Plundered Hearts** (8-bit/ST \$39.95) infocom text adventure based on romance novels. **Arctic Antics** (8-bit/ST \$24.95) Spy vs. Spy 3 in the arctic. **Boulder Dash Construction Set** (8-bit/ST \$24.95) make your own Boulder dash screens. **Road Warrior** (8-bit/ST \$24.95) scrolling Mad Max game. **Gauntlet** (8-bit/ST \$34.95) same as arcade hit of dungeon fighting. **Pinball Wizard** (ST \$34.95) another pinball construction set. **Knight Orc** (ST \$44.95) graphics adventure from lowly orc to knight. **Defender of the Crown** (ST \$?) awesome English knights saving England game. **Breach** (ST \$59.95) scrolling tactical level combat game. **Beyond Zork** (ST \$?) sequel with role playing and combat as well as standard infocom adventure. **Gunship** (ST \$?) fly an attack helicopter. **Dark Castle** (ST \$?) fast action dungeon adventure.

Whew! think that should keep you going for a while? Of course there are lots of programs I have not listed. Keep in mind that if you buy from a local source that encourages them to stock more Atari stuff. I know I have several titles on my Christmas wish list.

Last but not least I will leave you with a little information. Most of us do not get as much exercise as we (continued)



A Report From The 1988 COMDEX

By Anita Malign, START Editor

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Las Vegas, November 2, 1987

Atari intends to give the likes of Sun Microsystems and Apollo Computers a run for the money with Abaq (the root word for abacus), the new transputer-based workstation that the company is showing here.

By using RISC (Reduced Instruction Set Computer) architecture, the workstation will operate at 10 MIPS (million instructions per second). The latest graphics hardware and the IMS T-800 -- the Inmos Company's 32-bit microprocessor -- combine to form affordable, powerful personal workstations. A single transputer can deliver over ten times the power of an IBM PC AT. However, there's even greater strength in numbers. You can connect two, 10, 100 or even MORE transputers to create a relatively low-cost computer workstation with the power of a supercomputer. (Talk is that the price will be in the \$5000 range.) When attached to a transputer, the ST or Mega acts as the input/output device for the system. Transputers can be linked via a built-in high-speed serial port to form a multiprocessor array or a local area network.

Helios, the Unix-like operating system, was developed by the Perihelion Company in Great Britain, as was the transputer board itself. The Helios operating system encourages the use of many small programs which work together to create a final product.

Shiraz Shivji, Atari's vice president of research and development, expects that the transputer will be used primarily in engineering and science applications. Included with Abaq will be a very high resolution monitor, capable of four graphics modes: 1280 X 960 in 16 colors or monochrome; 1024 X 768 in 256 colors; 640 X 480 in 256 colors with two screens; and 512 X 480 in 16 million colors plus overlay. No firm delivery date is set, but late 1988 seems to be the most talked-about time frame. From a first-hand view, the crisp, vibrant graphics (such as four separate pictures running simultaneously) were drawing crushing crowds.

CD-ROM FOR ATARI

The exciting CD-ROM player introduced at

Comdex can read up to 540 megabytes of data or play music. It connects to Atari's ST and Mega computers through the DMA (direct memory access) channel, a communications port that transmits data at up to 10 million bits per second. At 540Mb, the player can store more data than 1,000 floppy disks or 200,000 printed pages.

Demonstrated at the show is an English and French visual dictionary from Facts on File. It is categorized by topics such as transportation and food: click on the transportation theme and choose from an array of topics such as ferries, container ships, airport terminals and so on -- all items illustrated. Speech output identifies each image in French and English. Grolier's Encyclopedia also runs on this CD-ROM, as do audio CDs. Atari has a task force at work now developing more products for this player, which will be available at computer specialty dealers and retail outlets in February, 1988, at a suggested retail price of \$599.

ATARI DESKTOP PUBLISHING

G.O. Graphics, in conjunction with Atari, will bring to market a sophisticated desktop publishing program called Deskset. This works as a front end to the CompuGraphics typesetting equipment, offering the use of 1,800 fonts. This is not just a desktop publishing program for four-page newsletters and the like: it could design entire publications such as Antic and START. It will output to such laser printers as the striking Atari laser printer, also being demonstrated with Deskset. (Look for the next Comdex installment for additional desktop publishing programs for the ST.) Deskset, which works only on a Mega, will work within the GEM environment and offers all the standard features of the most sophisticated desktop publishing programs -- features such as character compensation, kerning, columns, boxes, rules and the ability to merge text and graphics. Look for this product mid- to late 1988.

AND... ATARI PCS

The Atari PC1, introduced earlier this year, can be used as a local areanetwork workstation or as a standalone personal computer. It runs at a top speed of (continued)

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speed of 8 Mhz, with a software switch to set the clock speed to 4.77 when needed. The PC1 works with any CGA, MDA, EGA or multi-frequency monitor. Maximum color screen resolution is 640 X 350. The PC1 has a 64-color palette, with a maximum of 16 on the screen at a time. It is expected to retail at \$800.

New to the Atari PC family is the PC2, a dual-speed XT compatible with five slots and hard-disk support. The PC4 is an 80286 microprocessor-based IBM PC/AT compatible machine. It has clock speeds of either 8 or 12 Mhz, VGA-compatible video, four AT-style expansion slots, up to one megabyte of system RAM and is ready for an 80287 numeric coprocessor.

Additionally, Atari is announcing "Moses PromiseLAN," a local area network that can connect up to 17 PCs using off-the-shelf telephone wire. They will also be developing Moses PromiseLAN adaptors for its Mega and ST computers. Thus, the Mega and Atari laser printer will be able to share data with PCs and Apple Macintoshes.

COMING NEXT UPDATE

Watch for more third-party desktop publishing programs from Soft Logik, Timeworks, Migraph. . . Multiuser, Multitasking programs with the Idris operating system. . . desktop video from Antic Software. . . products galore from MichTron, Spectrum Holobyte, Word Perfect, Abacus, ISD Marketing, B.E.S.T. and lots more.

Pres. Page . . . (continued)

should and we are always looking for ways to burn calories easily. What you may not know is that you are doing things that burn up calories right now. The following is a partial list of calorie burning activities that most of us do: (calories are per hour)

- Beating around the bush - 75
- Jumping to conclusions - 100
- Climbing the walls - 150
- Swallowing your pride - 50
- Passing the buck - 25
- Throwing your weight around (depending on your weight) - 50-300
- Dragging your heels - 100
- Pushing your luck - 250
- Making mountains out of molehills - 500

- Hitting the nail on the head - 50
- Wading through paperwork - 300
- Bending over backwards - 75
- Jumping on the bandwagon - 200
- Balancing the books - 25
- Running around in circles - 350
- Eating crow - 225
- Tooting your own horn - 25
- Climbing the ladder to success - 750
- Pulling out the stops - 75
- Adding fuel to the fire - 150
- Opening a can of worms - 50

DISK OF THE MONTH

This month's double sided 8-bit Dace exclusive disk contains: The Parinoid Christmas Adventure by Mark Butler on side one. Side 2-> AMS Christmas Music by BIG Mike. The ST disk is still in process but highlights include: Simon Sez (a Simon type game) Easel ST (an awesome new accessory). Don't forget that entries for the graphics contest are due at the January meeting.

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The Last Three Years

by
Rick Graham



THE KING IS DEAD.....LONG LIVE THE KING

I had originally planned to write my article on the steep price increases of Atari ST's, but current events overtaken me. Yes, the King is dead, long live the King. Big Mike is leaving us for browner pastures and browner skies. He's not really dead, but I feel almost like a good friend is dying. Mike has been the heart and soul of our club for at least 3 years and perhaps a bit more.

Since his retirement at the ripe old age of 28, Mike has spent an increasing amount of time devoting himself to his favorite hobby, the Atari computer. It has been our good fortune that he washed up on our shores even for a short time as he has worked tirelessly and faithfully for the club. He has been Secretary, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, Disk of the Month Librarian, Sysop and even before that an extremely active member. Most of the above jobs were held concurrently! Can you believe it? Now that's what I call taking it easy in retirement!

It's been suggested by some that Big Mike, (for so he is called), is really an ambassador at large for Atari Corp. Not only has he been an officer in D.A.C.E. but was an officer in two other clubs at the same time! He was even approached by a fourth club and asked to be an officer. For some strange reason, he declined. An officer in three clubs (concurrently) and a member of four Atari clubs! This has got to be a record. If any other clubs out there have as an illustrious member, I want to hear it!

Those of you who have been around a while, know that Big Mike was instrumental in organizing the two Atari Expo's. If you went, it was readily apparent to all that a lot of effort and time was spent by the organizers and that this was one of the single most important aspects in the success of the Expo's.

I personally want to take this opportunity to thank Mike for all the help and guidance he unselfishly gave me over the last three years. He was co-sysop on my BBS 'River City Exchange'. We had just an outrageously fun

time posing as two wierdos with nom de plumes of 'Excidor' and 'Smiley'. We then set about attacking each other and anyone else in the war base without a shred of mercy and with great vigor. In fact so much was our enjoyment that we even assumed new names and attacked ourselves. It was great fun. Some of the other users caught right on, and others are still wondering what happened. Some of them are still looking for Idi Amin, and he can't move far enough away for me to forget him! Ha!

Anyway, every couple of nights Mike would call up Antioch from Concord at great expense and carry on like a delighted juvenile delinquent and I would happily follow suit. It was the best of times and we ran a BBS that became known around the country, probably because we were so crazy!

Anyhow, Mike is moving back to Southern California where he left his heart. I only wish it weren't so, but that's showbiz! I want to wish him luck, as I'm sure all the members in the club wish him the very best. I also want to assure Mike that there will always be a job waiting for him at D.A.C.E. It may be librarian of the 8-bit Disk of the Month, but hey what can I say.....nothing is too great a sacrifice for you Mike. Whadduh guy! All the best from a club you made one of the best.....D.A.C.E.! COME AND VISIT US ANYTIME!!!!

**5 1/4" BLANK DISKS
w/sleeves
10 for \$3.00**

NOEL

MY FOND ASSOCIATION

by
BIG Mike

NOEL

Looks like I'm packing up my tent and moving south. My wife has been transferred to Southern California and she starts work there on December 9th. Needless to say our house is up for sale and as soon as it is sold I too will join her in Los Angeles. This, indeed, may take awhile and I intend to continue my various duties as a DACE officer until it is time for the big move.

I have enjoyed my fond association with DACE over the past three years and the many friends I have made in the club. DACE has given me the wonderful opportunity to enhance my knowledge and skills with the computers we all realize are the best.

It goes without saying, that as a result of my eventual move a few positions will be open in DACE that will need to be filled i.e. Secretary, Newsletter Editor and ST Disk Librarian. Please

give some consideration to help actively support DACE by filling one of these positions. Remember that DACE is *YOUR* club and needs your participation.

You may have noticed that the newsletter this month is a little "skimpy" and there are two predominant reasons for this. First, (but not by any means foremost), I have been quite busy getting my house in pristine marketable condition. The overwhelming reason is that *YOU* did not submit an article for me to print this month (of course the President and Mr. Graham are exempt from this jibe).

I hope your holiday season will be happy and bright and that Santa will bring you many Atari hardware and software packages under the tree on Christmas morning.

HO HO HO ... ATARI CHRISTMAS

